



CITY OF TEMPE RECREATION  
YOUTH SPORTS  
LADYHAWKS FAST PITCH 10U FALL LEAGUE SOFTBALL RULES

**GAME MANAGEMENT**

All leagues will play under NFHS rules that do not appear or have not been amended by this edition of the LadyHawks Softball Rules. Tempe Parks and Recreation reserves the right to **change or introduce new rules** for the improvement of the LadyHawks Softball Program.

**PROOF OF AGE, REGISTRATION & ELIGIBILITY**

1. Birth Certificate & Registration must be on file in the Recreation office. They will not be accepted at the game site.
2. Registration: Must be on file and signed by guardian before the participant can practice or play.
3. Child must be registered at age as of January 1, 2020.
4. Player eligibility issues will **not** be solved on the field – the game should continue.
5. Player eligibility issues will be solved 24-48 hours after a concern has been expressed.

**PLAYING TIME/ELIGIBILITY**

1. Each player has the expectation to play defensively at least ½ the game.
2. **Players must have appeared in 50% of the games in order to be eligible for the post season tournament.** Coaches using ineligible player(s) may: lose dugout privileges, forfeit games, be eliminated from tournament play and/or banned from future league participation.
3. *Tournament* playing time may be based on the skill level of the player.

**UNIFORM**

A. Shirt/Team Jersey

1. All players on a team shall wear the LadyHawks (issued) team shirt & visor, EXCEPTION: club teams may wear their own uniforms as long as they fall within the guidelines of pants, sliding shorts, and shin guard.
2. Players *may* wear the team shirt outside their softball pants – not tucked in.
3. Numbers must remain visible.

4. If a player does not have a team uniform the head coach must consult with the site supervisor and home plate umpire prior to the start of the game. The umpire will deem if the participant is properly dressed for game activity.
5. There may be identical jersey numbers.

B. Headwear

Handkerchiefs do not qualify and cannot be worn around the head, neck, arm, or leg.

C. Pants

1. Players must wear pants OR have a combination of slider shorts & slider shin pad.
2. Pants must be long if player does not have slider shorts or slider shin pad, and can be mixed in style and color. Shorts may only be worn when accompanied by slider shorts & shin pad.
3. Sliding shorts and protective pads are strongly *recommended* for all players.

D. Undershirts

1. Player's undershirts, if worn, may be mixed in style and color

E. Jewelry

1. No jewelry may be worn. (Newly pierced ears may be covered with tape only if it is stud earring, no larger than .25 carats.)
2. All other jewelry (chains, charms, bracelets, bandanas etc.) must be removed and may not be worn during the game.
3. No gauged earrings will be allowed.

## **PRE-GAME**

1. **All players must be registered, with a signed waiver by a parent or legal guardian, with the City of Tempe before they can *practice or play*.**
2. Teams may be forced to forfeit until all players are officially registered.
3. Temporary tattoos or ink pen markings are not permitted.
4. **Line-up cards: Ten minutes before game time submit a line-up card to include FIRST AND LAST names, UNIFORM NUMBER , and substitute players.**
5. Warm-up WILL BE KEPT TO A MINIMUM.

The second game on the schedule will not have time for infield/outfield pre-game warm up, with the exception to the pitcher. The pitcher will be allowed 5 pitches in the first inning of their appearance, and any inning after that, the pitcher will be held to a 3 pitch maximum.

## **FIELD/BALL DIMENSIONS**

Field: Bases – 60' Pitching – 35'

Ball: 11" Ball

(Faulty game dimensions will be corrected immediately upon realization – ASA rule.)

## **GAME TIME**

- TUESDAY/THURSDAYS /SATURDAYS
- Each game will be 6 innings or called by time (70 minutes).
- A game is considered complete at the completion of 3 innings unless time has expired.
- SEE FORFEIT/MINIMUM PLAYER DETAIL if a complete team is not ready at game time.
- Make-up games will ONLY be scheduled if feasible to do so.

## **OFFICIAL TIME**

1. The *scorekeeper* will keep the official game time.
2. The 70-minute game timer will start after the umpire yells “Batter up” or “Play Ball” to the first batter.
3. The timer will be set for 70 minutes. At the 70-minute mark (the buzzer goes off) the current inning will be finished. The home team is always allowed to have the last bat, unless ahead at the conclusion of the visitors last bats. The beginning of the next inning takes place at the simultaneous completion of the last out of the previous inning.
4. Games should average 1.5 hours (90 minutes) each.

## **FORFEITS/MINIMUM PLAYERS NEEDED**

1. Teams must have 8 players to start and continue a game with the following exception:
  - A game may start if one team has at least 7 players. The team with 7 players automatically, if they are not already, becomes the visiting team. For the game to continue the 8<sup>th</sup> player must arrive prior to 3 outs being achieved, OR 6 runs having been scored, OR in time to bat in the 8<sup>th</sup> place in the batting order. If the 8<sup>th</sup> player does not appear, the game is a forfeit and the teams may continue play as part of the 2 inning scrimmage (refer to point #4).
2. If both teams have fewer than 8 players the game is a double forfeit.
3. The 8th player and any subsequent players that show up to play can only be inserted at the bottom of the batting order – using the “every player present” batting order, IF the team has not already batted through their lineup once. Players may not be added to the bottom of the batting order if they show up after their team has already gone through their batting lineup once.
4. Forfeited games will go in the book as 6-0. Teams will play a **2 inning scrimmage with umpires.** The first inning, every player present will take a turn at bat. The second inning will be played on the 3 out basis.

## **SCORING**

1. TO START EACH GAME, THE FIRST TIME THE VISITORS COME TO BAT, THEY WILL BE ALLOWED A MAXIMUM OF 6 RUNS. ALL TURNS AFTER THAT, INCLUDING THE FIRST TIME THE HOME TEAM COMES TO BAT, THE TEAM WILL BE ALLOWED TO SCORE AS MANY AS IT TAKES TO TIE (the current score) PLUS SIX (6) RUNS. There is no “continuation rule” for runners coming home after the six-max run is reached. After the sixth run scores (that is: allowing as many runs as it takes to tie plus 6), the other team will come to bat regardless of the number of outs in the inning.
2. Teams are limited to 6 runs per inning after reaching a tie score or if ahead by any amount of runs.
3. In the bottom of the last inning the home team only needs to score as many runs as needed to tie plus 1 run.

## **RUN RULE / RUN LIMITS**

Teams ahead by 18 runs, after 3 complete innings OR 60 minutes minimum of play, will be declared the winner and all game activity will end.

## **TIED GAMES**

1. Regular season games tied at the end of the end of 6 innings OR time expires (with the home team completing their last at bats), will be recorded as a tie (count as  $\frac{1}{2}$  win).
2. Tied games during tournament games will be governed by tournament rules, TBD later.

## **BASE RUNNING / STEALING (In 12U American Only)**

No stealing in 12U NATIONAL, but lead offs are permitted.

1. Stealing of bases permitted.

**The LOOK-BACK RULE** is in effect when the ball is live, the batter-runner has touched first base or has been declared out, and the pitcher has possession of the ball (e.g. has the ball in their hand, glove, under arm or chin, between their legs) within the 16-foot circle.

Any runner(s) in motion may continue without stopping or may stop once, any runner who is stopped or stops their motion must immediately move directly back to the last base touched or attempt to advance to the next base.

Once the runner stops at a base for any reason, they may not move off that base.

A batter-runner who overruns first and does not without delay attempt to advance to second is committed to return to first and stop. The runner, off base, may not stand motionless. There does not need to be any motion or recognition by the pitcher. Failure of the runner to respond as indicated shall cause the Umpire to signal the runner out. The ball shall be declared dead. If the pitcher no longer has possession of the ball within the 16-foot circle, the pitcher makes an attempt on any of the runners or a fake throw is made, this rule does not apply.

Being in the 16-foot circle is defined as both feet within or partially within the line. The feet may touch the line and extend outside the line. When the pitcher is in the pitcher's circle and a runner(s) is off the base, the pitcher is considered to be playing on the runner(s) when the throwing arm is raised or any forward 40 14th Edition (2-18 Online revision) movement of the body is made toward the runner. Movement of the head is not considered an attempt play. EFFECT: Ball is dead, and runner is out.

2. Runners are entitled to "lead-off" when the ball ***leaves the pitcher's hand***.  
In 12U NATIONAL, runners are entitled to "lead-off" when the ball leaves the pitching machine. There is no stealing in 12U National.
3. Penalty for leaving contact with the base early: ball is dead, and the base runner is out.
4. The infield fly rule will be in effect but is a judgement call by the umpire.

5. Pinch/courtesy runners may only be used for an injured player OR, for a catcher when they need to prepare for the next inning. The pinch/courtesy runner will be the player that made the last out.
6. Drop 3<sup>rd</sup> strike will NOT be in effect in any 10U Division.

## **BATTING**

1. The 10U National and American leagues must bat “every player present”. When batting “every player present,” unlimited defensive substitutions are allowed except for the pitcher. The pitcher may only “re-enter” in the pitching position once (NFHS).
2. Players arriving after the game starts must be added to the bottom of the batting order.
3. Using the “every player present line up,” when a player leaves the game due to injury or any other reason and does not return, the position in the batting order is an automatic out. After going through the lineup once, the vacated position will be passed over with no further penalty.
4. Warm up swings are NEVER PERMITTED in the dugout.
5. A batter shall be called out on appeal when they fail to bat in their proper turn and another batter completes a time at bat in their place. **NOTE:** Only the defensive team may appeal out of order after the batter has completed their time at bat.  
When an improper batter becomes a proper batter because no appeal is properly made as above, the next batter shall be the batter whose name follows that of such legalized improper batter. The instant an improper batter’s actions are legalized, the batting order picks up with the name following that of the legalized improper batter.  
**NOTE:** When several players bat out of order before discovery so that a player’s time at bat occurs while they are a runner, such player remains on base, but is NOT out as a batter.

## **PITCHING – NATIONAL DIVISION**

The batter will receive pitches from the machine. One plate umpire will call balls and strikes as usual. Batters will need to determine pitch as in regular softball.

- b. The batter is out on a third strike whether caught or uncaught.
- c. Batters hit by a pitch will be awarded 1st base.

The 10U National Division is a developmental division. It serves as a pivotal point in a young athlete’s mind of whether to keep playing or stop. This Division will be machine pitch.

Pitching Machine - the pitching machine shall be set as follows:

- a. Distance for center of the machine shall be thirty-five (35) feet. Speed for the machine shall be set between 30-40mph (5-4-2 or 4-4-2 machine settings).
- b. The pitching machine will be calibrated with mutual consent of the coaches. If they can not agree, umpire decision will stand.

A batted ball that hits the pitching machine shall be ruled a dead ball, the batter shall be awarded first base.

The player pitcher must have at least one foot in the pitcher’s circle when the batter’s coach is pitching. No other defensive players may be positioned inside the pitcher’s circle at the same time. The outfield is defined as the turf area on a regulation sized youth field or at least 10 feet beyond the baselines for other playing surfaces. At the start of the pitch, one player shall be in the pitcher’s position on either side of the pitching machine with one foot

on the side line of the 16-foot diameter circle. The pitcher cannot leave their position until the ball comes out of the machine.

1. **BALLS THAT ROLL PAST THE CONES IN THE OUTFIELD WILL BE PLAYED AS A GROUND RULE DOUBLE** and the batter will be awarded 2 bases with any runners advancing 2 bases as well. Balls that past the cones on a fly will be counted as a home run.
2. **Only ONE BASE is awarded ON AN OVERTHROW** (the base that the runner is going to plus ONE) unless the defensive team makes an attempt to get the runner out and subsequently makes another over throw. The runner will then be awarded another additional base.

## **PITCHING – AMERICAN DIVISION**

1. Pitching rubber at 35'0", and normal AIA practices. (Walks may occur – no help from the coach, as in if there is the 4<sup>th</sup> ball called, then the coach comes in to pitch... The pitch count is what it is from the player/pitcher.)

## **CATCHERS**

1. Catchers must wear all protective gear (chest protector, throat guard, mask and helmet) during the game, during any warmup or during any practice.
2. No player shall receive a throw in the crouch position without wearing full protective gear. Players will be asked to put full protective gear on first, and coaches will receive a warning on the first offense. If this continues after the first warning, the coaches may receive further punishment at the discretion of the league supervisor on-site and the umpire.
3. Adults may warm-up the pitcher between innings while the catcher is getting ready.

## **UMPIRES**

Any Umpire's decision, which involves judgment, such as whether a hit is fair or foul, whether a pitch is a strike or ball, or whether a runner is safe, or out, is final. If there is a reasonable doubt about some decision being in conflict with the rules, the coach or captain may ask that the correct ruling be made. The Umpire making the decision may ask another Umpire for information before making a final decision. **The use of videotape by game officials for the purpose of making calls or rendering decision is prohibited.**

## **STANDINGS AND AWARDS**

1. League standings will not be kept during the fall season
2. Tournament seeding will be determined by a blind draw method.
3. There will be a single elimination tournament for each division.
4. **Every team playing in the league must commit to the tournament schedule.**
5. Tournament winners; 1<sup>st</sup> through 2nd place will receive famous City of Tempe LadyHawks t-shirts.

## **COACHES NOTES**

1. Coaches ejected from a game **must** meet with the recreation coordinator in charge of the program before being allowed to return and resume coaching duties.
2. Any coach choosing to sit on a bucket or stand outside the confines of the dugout does so at their own risk. Coaches must stay within an “arm’s length” of their dug out or be subject to ejection.
3. Any coach that has any type confrontation with umpires, spectators or league representative, that results in further punishment by umpire or league representative, must meet with League Coordinator (Bobbi Jones) before being allowed in the dugout in any consequent games.

## **GAME NOTES**

In order to optimize playing/game time please orient your teams to the following guidelines:

1. There will be 1 minute between half innings.
2. Defensive team gatherings are NOT ALLOWED - the time will come out of the pitchers warm-up minute.
3. Warm-up pitches are LIMITED– see Pitching.
4. Use a courtesy runner for the catcher. Courtesy runner is the player that has the last recorded out. If no outs have been recorded, it will be last run scored.
5. Make an effort to have a coach warm-up the pitcher while the catcher gets ready.
6. The home plate umpire may control repeated offensive and or defensive conferences by a coach to her players, if the umpire thinks time is purposely being wasted. The umpire will first issue a warning then disqualifying (throwing out) the coach/manager. This rule is written to make sure no team tries to run out the game clock out unnecessarily.

## **PROTEST**

1. Protest will not be received or considered if they are based solely on a decision involving the accuracy of judgment on the part of the umpire.
2. There will be no recourse or relief on issues involving the misinterpretation of a playing rule.
3. The leagues will operate with the understanding that players, coaches and umpires can and will make mistakes. In the case of the umpires, we will review the events and use the results to make changes or use them as a teachable moment for the umpires and staff.
4. The expectation of the coaches is that they may make an inquiry about a call. If the question is not resolved to their satisfaction, they should drop their concern, continue the game with no further disruption and call the league coordinator within 24 hours of game time.

### **A FINAL BUT IMPORTANT NOTE:**

In the event of any rule question or *cases not covered* in the LadyHawks Softball Guide Handbook, the Recreation Coordinator shall have the authority to institute new rules or to change rules, to maintain the continuity of the “LadyHawks Fast Pitch Softball Program.

### **FIELD SPORTS HOTLINE: 480-350-5293**

In the event of inclement weather, please check the Field Sports Hotline number. We update the recorded message starting at 3:00p and then in 30 minutes increment when harsh weather is approaching. Make sure all your parents have this number. *Always assume we are playing.* Weather in the desert is fickle. It can be storming in South Tempe and be clear as a bell in North Tempe. It is NOT unusual to cancel the 6:00p game but PLAY the 7:30pm game. We will make every effort to reach you via your emergency contact number either from my office or my cell phone. Please make sure you give us a number in which you can be contacted in an emergency, or at the last possible moment in case of game cancellation.

### **LadyHawks' Fast Pitch Softball Staff**

Bobbi Jones, Sr. Recreation Coordinator 480-350-5267 [bobbi\\_jones@tempe.gov](mailto:bobbi_jones@tempe.gov)

Ashley Cardenas, Program Coordinator 480-350-5207 [ashley\\_cardenas@tempe.gov](mailto:ashley_cardenas@tempe.gov)

We can maximize the Youth Sport Experience for all players by having  
SHARED VISION, SHARED GOALS and  
SHARED DESTINY.

### **PRACTICE FIELD INFORMATION:**

1. Email requests to: [bobbi\\_jones@tempe.gov](mailto:bobbi_jones@tempe.gov) OR [ashley\\_cardenas@tempe.gov](mailto:ashley_cardenas@tempe.gov)
2. All practices will be for 1.5 hours
3. 75% of your team must be registered to request a field
4. Please request field times that are congruent with your possible game times.
5. If you request a field for practice and do not cancel in time; ie. By 3:30pm the afternoon of, all subsequent reservations will be WITHDRAWN.
6. If you happen to get to the practice field and someone is already playing there, please inquire if it a LadyHawks team, and when they were scheduled. **Please call Bobbi if there is any confusion: 602-577-3316.** If I am not available, please work something out with the other LadyHawks team. If it is NOT a LadyHawks team, AND I am not available, please call: Night Security at: 480-586-4229.

**IF your lights to not come on at a practice field:** Call Night security: 480-586-4229.  
Call Bobbi – 602-577-3316 if you do not get a response from night security.